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BALANCED LITERACY IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Education:  
Reading Option

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by  
Nanette Marie Prince  
September 1998

BALANCED LITERACY IN PRIMARY EDUCATION


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California State University,  
San Bernardino


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by  
Nanette Marie Prince  
September 1998

Approved by:

  
Joseph Gray, First Reader

9/8/98  
Date

  
John Wheeler, Second Reader, Principal,  
Rustic Lane Elementary, Riverside

## ABSTRACT

Balanced literacy in primary education is a way of helping students become proficient readers. By meeting students' individual needs through a balanced holistic approach, students will read for meaning and understanding. The shift the state has made from literature based reading to what they have now referred to as a balanced literacy program has caused some critics to view the state as a reversal of their original intent from a few years ago. Many as a profession had embraced the philosophy of child-centered principles of literacy learning and teaching. It is with this understanding that teachers play a significant role in students' literacy learning. It is vital that the teacher engage students in reading experiences that make sense to the reader. Through teacher assistance, students gain the knowledge that written language and spoken language are different, yet the same human function applies, and that is to create meaning.

In addition to the State's Balanced Literacy Program, they have also requested that districts use the new STAR test for all their students. The role standardized tests is likely to remain important, but it is the use of authentic assessment that should drive reading instruction. Through the use of Marie Clay's An Observation Survey, teachers gain valuable knowledge as they peek into the mind of their beginning readers, and see the strategies they are

using or not using. Effective teachers incorporate the reading strategies into their instruction so their students become independent readers. It is through a balanced literacy program that students will achieve success.

The goal of this project is to help para-professionals help children become proficient readers. Para-professionals will gain the understanding of the three cueing systems, how to use running records, and how to use assessment to document student's growth and needs. The feedback the para-professionals receive will help drive the teaching that occurs in the reading lab.

The para-professionals are the curriculum leaders in the reading lab providing opportunities for students to use language in authentic, richly contextual, functional ways.

With the knowledge gained from the four two-hour workshops, the para-professionals will be a valuable asset to the reading lab.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction and Problem Statement

My school has an enrollment of 686 kindergarten students through sixth-grade. The campus also houses two preschool classes. It has a culturally and ethnically diverse population made up of 71% Hispanic students, 20% Anglo students, 7% African American students, and 2% classified as other. The transiency rate is currently forty-five percent. Eighty-two percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. There are fifteen regular classrooms and nine bilingual classrooms. Bilingual tutors and aides provide assistance to students needing help both in the regular and bilingual classrooms. The National Percentile Ranking (NPR) reading scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills for the 96-97 school year are as follows: grade 2= 28th percentile, grade 3=17th percentile, grade 4=26th percentile, grade 5=23th percentile, and grade 6=23th percentile. Kindergarten and first-grade students were not tested. The students in my school must be involved in the instructional program that will most effectively teach them to read.

As students enter first grade each September their parents of course expect that their children to learn to read. As educators however, we are well aware of the obstacles that these students face to even get them ready to read. As we begin to understand the environment many of

our students are coming from, we realize that many do not have books at home, and newspapers are a luxury. Countless numbers of parents lack parenting skills and do not see the connection between home involvement and school success. The perceived problem is how do we overcome these obstacles and accomplish the goal of students reading on grade level. The answer according to the state is a balanced literacy program in reading, writing, spelling and oral language.

The state believes as published in Teaching Reading (1996) that a balanced literacy program: focuses on the essential components of a complete program of early reading instruction, with specific guidance in systematic, explicit skills instruction and other essential components of a early reading program; classroom diagnosis; program assessment and early intervention strategies, including family-school partnerships that support student learning and home learning (p. 2).

I on the other hand believe in a more holistic philosophy. My belief reflects that which Adams and Bruck (1995) discuss in Resolving The Great Debate, that whole language is anchored on the premise that there is a strong correlation between oral language acquisition and reading acquisition. I believe in teaching to meet a student's individual need versus a set program as the state suggests. In addition, reading becomes natural when students read for meaning and purpose. Smith (1985) reminds us that readers



must bring meaning to print rather than expect to receive meaning from it (p.48). In addition, Smith (1985) says that children do not learn to read in order to make sense of print "They strive to make sense of print and as a consequence learn to read" (p. 120).

The state suggests teaching reading in isolated parts (p. 11). Weaver (1994) points out how important it is not to teach reading in isolated parts. That meaning arises for readers during the transition between reader and the text in a given situational context, and meaning evolves (p.27).

As stated in Teaching Reading (State Superintendent of Public Instruction, California State Board of Education, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 1996), "The Reading Task Force called for a balanced and comprehensive approach to early reading instruction that includes both teacher-directed skills instruction and the activities and strategies most often associated with literature-based, integrated language arts instruction" (p.3).

Students come to school ready to learn, but are starting at different places. It is up to the teacher to find that place for each child and create appropriate instruction. My problem as I perceive it is that the state's approach lacks the understanding that each child coming to school is not in the same place and does not have the same experiences.

A teacher's role in the beginning years of learning to

read is critical. Classrooms are a place where meaningful and useful reading and writing activities engage all students. A particularly important activity centers in the use of context clues. Smith (1985) supports the idea that children do use context clues in their spoken language as they do in reading. He believes that the use of context clues can only be used if the reading makes sense to the child. "Reliance on phonics-on (spelling-to-sound) correspondence-is dysfunctional in fluent reading and interferes with learning to read." Smith also points out that readers must bring meaning to the text, employing their prior knowledge of the topic and the language that is used. This use of what Smith refers to as "nonvisual" information is not possible if the text being read does not make sense to the reader. Smith believes nonvisual information is of critical importance because it goes beyond surface structure of language, in sounds of speech or in the visible marks of writing. It is what the reader brings to text to help with the meaning (p. 71).

It is the function of the teacher to make reading an enjoyable experience for children as well as to ensure students participate in reading activities that make sense to the child. Smith (1985) believes that there are three important objectives in beginning to read and continuing to learn to read. The first is that students must understand the functions of print. They must have the opportunity to

experience print and gain insight about its meaning and usefulness. Second, students must gain familiarity with written language. Students must begin to understand that spoken language and written language are very different. One of the main ways a teacher can assist students in understanding the difference between written language and spoken language is for the teacher to read to the students. The third objective Smith mentions is for students to get the chance to learn. He believes that it is important to read to children, but just as important to read with them. This is where students are able to try different reading strategies and are able to read a few words that they might already know (p.134).

Fountas and Pinnell (1996) maintain that it is through guided reading that students gain opportunities to develop as individual readers. During guided reading students read at their instructional level. During this time with the support from the teacher, students are able to use and develop strategies as they read aloud. Fountas and Pinnell (1996) are in agreement that the heart of a balanced literacy program is guided reading. During guided reading students are grouped according to their ability. These groups are ever changing as students progress at their own rate of growth and as they master using all the reading strategies (p. 1). The focus is on reading for meaning while problem solving. The ultimate goal of guided reading

is to help children learn how to use independent reading strategies successfully (p.1).

Another important aspect of a balanced literacy program as defined by Assembly Bill 1086 is appropriate materials to help students learn to read. Students need an abundance of books to practice this new skill. There should be books that are at their independent reading level so they are able to practice with ease this new skill as well as read for pleasure. Students also need materials at their instructional level. These are books in which the students know most of the words but with instruction from the teacher, they will be able to use their reading strategies to figure out the new words. Selecting the appropriate reading material is very important. Understanding the purpose of the materials a teacher may choose is also very important. Having students try to read material at their frustration level only defeats the purpose of teaching them to use reading strategies.

Assessment and observation are key components in a balanced program. According to Clay (1993), observations provide feedback to our instruction and allow teachers to personalize lessons to individuals who may need extra help in a certain area. When children enter school, we need to observe what they know and can do, and build on that foundation whether it is rich or meager (p. 6).

Then too a balance literacy program regularly provides

several kinds of reading and writing, but at the heart of a balanced literacy program is guided reading.

Understanding that a classroom needs balance between whole group and small group, individual instruction, teaching a variety of reading strategies, writing and reading for meaning and understanding, and constant assessing of students along the way, will help facilitate most children to be reading at the end of first grade. One form of assessment is Marie Clay's An Observation Survey. Teachers or para-professionals are able to use direct assessment to modify instruction. This modification is particularly important in the formative stages of new learning. By completing the observations, teachers see which students do not understand basic reading concepts. Clay (1993) reminds us that the confusion of young readers belongs to all beginners: the successful readers sort themselves out and the unsuccessful do not (p.81).

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

In the state of California as the reading paradigm shifts to a more traditional model of teaching reading, many educators see the state taking a step backwards in light of all the current research completed on how children learn to read. For those at the other end of the spectrum, there are feelings of jubilation that the state has finally come to its senses. In Teaching Reading (1996), advocacy is given to a balanced approach:

It was determined that a balanced and comprehensive approach to reading must have:

- (1) a strong literature, language, and comprehensive program that includes a balance oral and written language;
- (2) an organized, explicit skills program that includes phonemic awareness (sound in words), phonics, and decoding skills to address the needs of the emergent reader;
- (3) ongoing diagnosis that informs the teaching and assessment that ensures accountability; and,
- (4) a powerful early intervention program that provides individual tutoring for children at risk of reading failure (p.3).

Teaching Reading (1996) also addresses the importance of welding together the use of rich language and skills instruction:

The program advisory suggests that explicit skills instruction be part of a broader language-rich program consistent with the best practices of literature-based language arts instruction and the English-Language Arts

Framework, which is currently under revision. Any changes made to improve or enhance reading instruction and practice should be informed by current research while conforming to relevant statutes (p. 4).

### **Balanced Reading Defined by Assembly Bill 1086**

The first component of a balanced reading program as defined by AB1086 is a strong literature, language and comprehensive program that has a balance between oral and written language. Edelsky, Altwerger, and Flores (1991), state that these elements are what whole language is based on. Their point of view is that not just oral language counts as language, "oral language, written language, sign language-each of these is a system of linguistic conversations for creating meanings. That means none is 'the basis' for the other; none is a secondary representation of the other" (p.9).

Robb (1994) makes the point that psychologists and linguists such as Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Michael Halliday influenced whole language beliefs by emphasizing that learning a language and solving problems are active and social, and that people comprehend how language works by using it (p.11).

Edelsky et al. (1991) agree that language learning is both natural and social. From their perspectives, learning written language is no different. They believe that written language is really used around, in front of, and

with the learner. It too is learned as a by-product of use. Learning language is universal from culture to culture. Acquisition occurs through actual use. "The activity surrounding the use of environmental print and the adult-child interactions surrounding storybook reading provide the social context through which children learn how print means and what print is for" (p.17).

Reading, writing, speaking and listening according to Cambourne (1988) are different in many ways, but are parallel manifestations of the same human function and that is the mind's effort to create meaning (p.29).

The second component for a balanced and comprehensive reading program, according to the state, is an organized explicit skills program that includes phonemic awareness and the teaching of phonics. Most students who enter kindergarten have an adequate vocabulary and a command of most of the phonemes of their own language. The element that most students lack according to Yopp (1992) is phonemic awareness, the understanding that language is composed of a series of individual sounds. She believes for students to benefit from formal reading instruction, they need a certain level of phonemic awareness. Yopp states, "Reading instruction, in turn, heightens their awareness of language. Thus, phonemic awareness is both a prerequisite for and a consequence of learning to read" (p. 20).

Juel (1996) also found that the top two predictors in



helping to predict the success of a child learning to read were in fact, phoneme segmentation ability and letter names. This was even more predictive than the child's IQ score, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or even the amount of reading the parents did with the child before entering school. Juel assets the importance of children being able to "unlock the relationships between the sounds they use to say words and the letters of the alphabet with which they will write and read these words" (p. 2). Juel also reminds us that learning to read involves both knowledge of the content as well as the form and a balance between both is essential (p. 2).

Shefelbine (1995) agrees with the state that the systematic instruction of phonics should include explicit instruction in letter sounds and blending. An additional point Shefelbine makes is that teachers must use their own judgement in their classroom and avoid using a feast-or-famine approach in the teaching of phonics (p. 7). The purpose of this is that instruction will be balanced for all three cueing systems. Only teachers themselves are able to see where their students' weaknesses lie and help them become strengths.

Another point of view comes from Moustafa (1997) who found that beginning readers had trouble analyzing spoken words into print. Her research on children's use of onset and rime found that, when faced with an unfamiliar word,

students did better if they had knowledge of common words. She found that children make analogies between words with the same letter sequences. This information further indicates that children use onset and letter-rime correspondences rather than letter-phoneme correspondences. During her study she found that "children's knowledge of the common words accounted for 95 percent of the unusual words they were able to pronounce, the children's knowledge of letter-phoneme correspondences accounted for only 64 percent of the unusual words they were able to pronounce" (p.89). Moustafa believes that reading is making sense of print and it is not necessary to sound out print words in order to read them.

Smith (1985) concurs with Moustafa. Smith believes that for teachers to expect readers to learn and rely upon phonics is to distract them from meaning making. He maintains that the reason phonics does not work for children is that the link between letters and sounds cannot be uniquely specified. Children must have entire words or large parts of them in their memory before they can recognize words, which makes individual spelling-to-sound correspondences largely redundant (p. 49). Our written language is made up of twenty-six symbols yet we have more than forty distinctive sounds. Smith believes phonics works only if you know what the word might be in the first place (p.49).

Smith's perception on how children learn to read is the same as how they learn to talk. He believes that children are trying to make sense of the print around them, as in spoken language they are trying to make sense of the language they hear and in turn employ it themselves. He sees children surrounded by environmental print, at the grocery store, driving down the street, and even on TV. He believes that children strive to and do get meaning from the printed word if it makes sense. Smith expresses this another way, "it is a mistake to equate the written language environment of children with the number of books they see in their homes" (p.120). Perfetti (1995) also follows the beliefs of Smith in that students are trying to make sense of print. Perfetti's (1995) perception of "good literacy instruction makes phonemes more visible while it promotes their mapping to printed symbols" (p.114). Perfetti believes that literacy and phonemic awareness can be developed in tandem linking the two together.

Weaver (1994) also believes that there is no reason to teach phonics relationships intensively and systematically. She sees no reason to teach actual phonics rules.

She summarizes these points as follows:

1. Just as students learn oral language pattern, they also learn common phonics patterns. This of course is with the understanding that they are given ample opportunities to read environmental print, predictable stories and write using invented spelling.
2. Not all visual information is equally important. For example, vowels contribute

relatively little to the specific identification of words, particularly when words occur in a meaningful context. Vowels help mainly by being there.

3. There are so many rules and most have exceptions to the rules. In countless words it's hard to know the rule unless you know the word already.

4. Effective readers don't process words letter by letter but by word clusters.

5. Effective readers also use prior knowledge and context cues to help make meaning of words.

6. When a student has had a strong phonics program, his/her only strategy is to sound a word out.

7. Overemphasizing word identification, many students will not read for meaning, only for getting the word right.

8. Many emergent readers struggle with phonics because it is abstract and auditory. For many the learning of phonics is very difficult if not impossible.

9. For many children phonics is harder than reading. Many students will be labeled reading failures before they are really given a chance.

10. Children who learn to read naturally do so without the help of a systematic phonics program.

11. Research in whole language classrooms suggests that less formal and less systematic ways of helping children develop functional phonics knowledge work better than direct, systematic teaching of phonics.

12. Phonics taught as the opportunity arises during authentic reading and writing experiences are more beneficial to students.

13. Children who come to school with fewer book experiences are terribly disadvantaged by programs that teach phonics intensively and systematically. (pp.197-199)

It is believed by May (1990) that one of the most common phrases children hear when learning to read is "sound it out." May cites several reasons as to why this is a poor strategy for children. First, when you tell a child to sound out a word, you are telling him/her that pronouncing the words is what reading is all about.

Students, in actuality, should have the understanding that meaning is what reading is all about.

Second, by telling a child to "sound it out," the teacher is missing an important part of teaching all the cueing systems in reading (p.218).

Clay (1993) agrees that proficient readers read for meaning. "The smarter readers ask themselves the most effective questions for reducing uncertainty: the poorer readers try lots of trivial questions and waste their opportunities to reduce their uncertainty. They do not put the information-seeking processes into effective sequences" (p.9). This explanation illustrates why it is so important to teach students all reading strategies and have a balance in the teaching of literacy.

Fountas and Pinnell (1996) believe that guided reading should be the heart of a balanced literacy program. They believe that children learn to read by reading, and reading begins before a teacher sits down to do a guided reading lesson with their students. Early literacy begins almost the moment a child is born. Children encounter the symbol of literacy in their worlds. Children see signs for stores, restaurants, labels, while walking through the grocery store, and some even the graffiti they see in their neighborhoods (p.4).

Once again Fountas and Pinnell (1996) remind us the more children use problem solving while reading for

meaning, the better they become at problem solving. They believe it is the responsibility of the teacher to make sure that children receive the support and guidance they need to read challenging texts. The purpose of guided reading is to support that process (p.6).

### **Writing**

Spelling, probably more than any other aspect of the school curriculum, is used to mark social status according to Graves (1994). Since the mid-nineteenth century, spelling and handwriting marked the educated person. He believes that the American public still sees good spelling just behind reading and math in importance (p.255).

Wilde (1992) has discovered that our knowledge about how children learn to spell and punctuate has increased tremendously. Spelling was once believed to be only a matter of mastering the spelling of a number of words. We now know that children's spelling is not only a reflection of their exposure to the written word and knowledge of specific words, but also an indication of their understanding of our spelling system (p.19).

In addition, Wilde (1992) also found that spelling is not learned by rote memorization but as intellectual processes. "Learning to spell takes place primarily not by accumulating information but by elaborating one's schemata" (p.20).

Chomsky (1979) suggests "that the ability to write,

representing words according to the way they sound, precedes the ability to read among children more generally" (p.43). Chomsky argues that "from a developmental standpoint, children are ready to write before they are ready to read and that their introduction to the printed word should therefore be through writing rather than through reading" (p.43). For many classrooms this is the exception rather than the rule. Buchanan (1989) suggests the act of spelling itself is a mental process where students are using predicting, confirming, and disconfirming, from prior knowledge (p.1).

According to Sitton (1995), children go through predictable stages in developing of spelling strategies, but they go through these stages each at their own rate. The first stage is prephonemic spelling. Children at this stage sometimes scribble, some letters are formed and they string letters together without the understanding that letters represent phonemes. During the second stage, early phonemic spelling, children make a limited attempt to represent phonemes with letters. Chomsky (1979) believes that during the months a child engages in the second stage of writing he/she is provided with valuable opportunities of phonetics and word analysis, and letter-sound correspondences (p.48). Phonemic letter name spelling is the third stage children go through. At stage three children are using letters for phonemes, and are beginning

to understand the concept of a word. Chomsky (1979) discovered that during the third stage children begin to ask about environmental print. They begin to try to sound words out and identify them. It is as if they now notice all the print around them (p.48). The final stage is transitional spelling. At this stage children are beginning to understand information about spelling such as spelling patterns, and recalling words from their visual memory (pp.9,10). Chomsky (1979) reported that some children at this stage begin to use standard spelling at school yet still use invented spelling at home. In addition, Chomsky noted that students make the transition from inventive spelling to standardized spelling at different rates as they became more experienced with reading and were expected to abandoned their earlier form of writing (p.51).

Peters (1967) believes that spelling is a visual skill. As adults, if unsure how to spell a word, we write it down to see if it looks right (p. 40). Knowledge of the language and its spelling rules cannot always help in the correct spelling of a word; it can only provide likely options. The only way to know which option is the correct one is to remember. And the visual modality is the main key to remembering.

Spelling seems to be very systematic and fairly uniform from child to child. The English language contains



approximately 40 sounds, but the alphabet provides only 26 symbols. What do children who do not read yet but can write need to know about written language? They need to be aware of the letters of the alphabet and aware of the sounds of words to the point of being able to segment words phonemically.

Shefelbine (1995) believes "that students must develop phomenic awareness to pass through the spelling-sound stage that leads to fluency" (p.3).

Chomsky (1979) states "another aspect of the spelling that makes it more accessible than reading is its direct relationship to the way words are pronounced. Reading, on the other hand, is not simply the reverse of spelling, that is translating from print to pronunciation" (p.47). Reading requires an extra step that is not required in writing. The reader unlike in their own writing does not know the message ahead of time.

### **Assessment**

Assessment and observation of students is one of the most important components of a balanced literacy program. The information gathered during the assessment helps the teacher know the student's strengths and areas where the teacher needs to focus. This information helps teachers personalize lessons for individual students. The state suggests an ongoing diagnosis that informs the teaching and assessment that ensures accountability.

Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) remind us that authentic assessment is defined as "genuine" and "real" (p.69). Once again we have come to not only reading for meaning but assessing for meaning. Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) use the example of students copying a thank-you note from the board rather than compose his/her own, they are learning that the teacher values perfection rather than personal meaning (p.55).

Harp (1994) informs us that there are wide differences between whole language and traditional assessments. Whole language classrooms focus around authentic literacy events for children. "The logical extension of this principle is that evaluation should be a natural outcome of the process of creating meaning used by the learner" (p.37).

Not only do the assessments differ from whole language and traditional classrooms, but so do the attitudes of the teachers. According to Harp (1994), whole language teachers embrace the idea of evaluation based on their observations and knowledge of how students learn. Evaluation is one of the most important components of a whole language classroom. The information gathered from assessments drive the program verses traditional classrooms where the curriculum drives the program (p.43).

The state once again has placed demands on districts with the new STAR testing of all students regardless of their English language proficiency. As discovered by

researchers (Fair Test, K-12 Testing Fact Sheet), standardized tests are biased against females, children of color, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds and children who live in rural areas. There have been efforts to help eliminate such biases, but they have only been partially successful. Researchers have also found that standardized tests tend to narrow the curriculum to what will be tested. Tests scores provide little useful information to help improve classroom instruction and students' learning.

Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) are in agreement and believe most standardized, norm-referenced tests fragment reading and writing into isolated skills or require use of isolated cueing systems (p.13).

Harp (1994) believes the most destructive influence of norm-referenced testing is found in the everyday reading activities of children. For students in non-whole language classrooms, reading instruction may consist of activities that will help insure students will do well on tests. Harp points out that time spent on test-like activities robs time from the important experiences of real reading and writing (p.59).

A child-oriented alternative is authentic assessment. Authentic assessment is derived from what students are doing daily in their classrooms. One of the main benefits to authentic assessment is that it improves teaching and

learning. Once again, the assessment is driving the teaching verses the curriculum.

Goodman, Goodman, and Hood (1989) have found three important categories in thinking about whole language evaluation. The first is observation which includes the teacher examining what students are doing while the teachers observes on the sidelines. The second category is interaction which occurs when the teacher converses with the student through journal writing or discussion. The final category is analysis. Analysis includes eliciting information from the students through written response, oral conversation, or a composition. All three categories help confirm information that is gathered from the use of the others (p.8).

Clay (1996) reminds us that if we attend to individual children as they work and focus on their progress in learning, the outcome from the observation will provide valuable feedback to our instruction (p.5).

Clay also points out the all children are ready to learn when they come to school; it is the teachers who need to know how to create appropriate instruction from where the child is (p.8). Through observation and evaluation teachers are able to provide appropriate instruction for each individual child.

Having para-professionals perform the Observation Survey on students frees the teacher to be more effective

and spend more time working with students. This increase in instruction increases the power of any intervention that needs to be done to help students who are having confusions. As the teacher monitors changes that are occurring, the program should be fine-tuned to meet students' individual needs. The knowledge teachers/para-professionals gain from observing student behaviors in reading allows teachers/para-professionals to guide literacy learning in individual students.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Goals, Outcomes, and Limitations

#### Goals

The main goal of this project is training para-professionals in how to administer The Observation Survey and Instrumento De Observacion by Marie Clay. As a result para-professionals will become careful observers of students learning to read and write. It will help para-professionals monitor the progress of the students the para-professionals are working with. The result of their training will help the para-professionals provide instruction based on their assessment. In addition, para-professionals will gain an understanding of child-centered instruction. They will also see the relationship between assessment and instruction. They will acquire the knowledge that assessment informs instruction.

The training for the para-professionals will consist of four two-hour workshops.

#### Objectives

1. Para-professionals will be trained in how to administer Marie Clay's An Observation Survey and Instrumento De Observacion.
2. Para-professionals will be trained in how to score Marie Clay's An Observation Survey and Instrumento De Observacion.
3. Para-professionals will be trained in how to identify

students' needs by their scores.

4. Para-professionals will be trained in the spelling stages children go through.

5. As a result of training, para-professionals will provide instruction based on assessment.

### Limitations

One of the limitations of the project is that the assessments are more appropriate for primary students or students who are emergent readers.

Also there are no assessments for students who speak a language other than Spanish or English.

### Assessments

1. An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement
2. Instrumento De Observacion De Los Logros De La Lecto-Ecsritura Inicial

## APPENDIX A:

### Project Forward

The goal of this project is for para-professionals to gain the knowledge of observing children during reading and using the knowledge gained to help the students become proficient readers. Para-professionals will also gain the understanding of the three cueing systems, how to use running records, and how to use assessments to document student's growth and needs. The feedback the para-professionals receive will help drive the teaching that occurs in the reading lab.

The training will consists of four two-hour workshops. Overheads will be made of the following forms:

running records

letter identification

writing

hearing sounds in words (dictation).

#### **Scoring**

When taking Running Records, a student reads a book, at what the para-professionals believes to be his/her level. The para-professional makes a check mark for each correct response and records every error in full. If the error rate is more than 90 percent, the book is too difficult for the child. By looking at the errors, the para-professional begins to see if the child is reading from the meaning of the message, the structure of the sentence, or from visual



or from visual cues.

During Letter Identification the student is asked to identify upper and lower case letters. They may respond with either the name, sound, or a word that begins with the letter. If a child gives an incorrect response it is placed in the space marked I.R. One point is scored for each correct response.

Examining examples of children's writing gives us a great deal of understanding of their knowledge about print. After children write the words they know, para-professionals score students language level by the number of linguistic organizations used by the student.

The scoring of the Dictation Task is done by counting the child's representation of sounds (phonemes) by letters (graphemes). Score one point for each correct sound the child has recorded.

Through the use of observation, para-professionals will take the child from where he is and begin teaching from there.

## Workshop One:

### Running Records

The purpose of the first workshop is to teach para-professionals the conventions and analysis of running records.

During their analysis training they will learn how to calculate the error rate, learn whether the child is using from:

- the meaning of the message
- the structure of the sentence
- something from the visual cues.

In addition, para-professionals will learn to consider whether students are using cross-checking strategies as well as self-correction.

Finally, para-professionals will gain the knowledge that running records provide:

1. help in placement of children
2. decide what text is the appropriate reading instruction
3. to capture reading behavior which can be analyzed later
4. to determine the level of difficulty of a particular book
5. to help make critical decisions about the individual
6. to keep record of change.

## Workshop Two:

### Observation Task

The second workshop will include how to administer and analysis the assessments of letter identification, writing vocabulary, hearing and recording sounds in words. Para-professionals will learn how to make comments on the student's performance in relation to each of the following six topics:

- useful strategies on text
- problem strategies on text
- useful strategies with words
- problem strategies with words
- useful strategies with letters and sounds, separately and in clusters
- problem strategies with letters and sounds, separately and in clusters

## Workshop Three:

### Spelling

Para-professionals will receive training in the spelling stages that students got through. They will learn what spelling rules to teach students as well as what does and does not transfer from Spanish to English. They will also learn activities that will help students by increasing student's visual skills.

## Workshop Four:

### Review of Running Records

Workshop Four will consists of para-professionals bringing running records that they have analyzed to ensure accuracy. This will be a question answer period to clarify any problems the para-professionals may be having.

APPENDIX B:  
- Observation Survey

LETTER IDENTIFICATION SCORE SHEET																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
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<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>A    Alphabet response: tick (check)</p> <p>S    Letter sound response: tick (check)</p> <p>Word    Record the word the child gives</p> <p>IR    Incorrect response: Record what the child says</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"></div> </div>																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
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A F K P W Z

B H O J U

C Y L Q M

D N S X I

E G R V T

a f k p w z

b h o j u a

c y l q m

d n s x i

e g r v t g

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HOJA DE RESULTADOS SOBRE LA IDENTIFICACIÓN DE LETRAS										Resultado
										61
Nombre: _____					Escuela: _____					Fecha: _____
Maestra/o de clase: _____					Anotador: _____					Grado: _____

	A	S	Palabra	R.I.		A	S	Palabra	R.I.	
A					a					<b>Confusiones:</b>
F					f					
K					k					
P					p					
LL					ll					
Z					z					<b>Letras desconocidas:</b>
B					b					
H					h					
O					o					
J					j					
U					u					<b>Comentarios:</b>
CH					ch					
C					c					
Y					y					
L					l					
Q					q					<b>Anotaciones:</b>
M					m					
Ñ					ñ					
D					d					
N					n					
S					s					<b>A</b> Respuesta con nombre alfabética: anote con ✓  <b>S</b> Respuesta con sonido de la letra: anote con ✓  Respuesta con sonido de sílaba: anote con la sílaba
X					x					
I					i					
					a					
E					e					
G					g					<b>Palabra</b> Anote la palabra que dice el/la niño/a  <b>Respuesta en inglés:</b> Anote la respuesta con la letra 'E' (English)  <b>RI</b> Respuesta incorrecta: Anote lo que dice el/la niño/a.
R					r					
V					v					
T					t					
W					w					
					rr					
					g					
<b>Totales</b>					<b>Totales</b>					

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A	F	K	P	LL	Z
B	H	O	J	U	CH
C	Y	L	Q	M	Ñ
D	N	S	X	I	E
G	R	V	T	W	
a	f	k	p	ll	z
b	h	o	j	u	ch
c	y	l	q	m	ñ
d	n	s	x	i	a
e	g	r	v	t	w
rr	g				

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HEARING AND RECORDING SOUNDS IN WORDS (DICTATION TASK) OBSERVATION SHEET			
Name: _____	Age: _____	Date: _____	
Recorder: _____	Date of Birth: _____	TEST SCORE:	<input type="text"/> /37
(Fold heading under before child uses sheet)		STANINE GROUP:	<input type="text"/>
<p>COMMENT</p>			

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Form A I have a big dog at home.  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16  
 Today I am going to take him  
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33  
 to school.  
 34 35 36 37

Form B Mum has gone up to the shop.  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18  
 She will get milk and  
 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33  
 bread.  
 34 35 36 37

Form C I can see the red  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11  
 boat that we are going  
 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26  
 to have a ride in.  
 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37

Form D The bus is coming. It  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15  
 will stop here to let me  
 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32  
 get on.  
 33 34 35 36 37

Form E The boy is riding his bike.  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18  
 He can go very fast on it.  
 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37

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HOJA DE OBSERVACIÓN DEL DICTADO			Resultado
Nombre: _____	Escuela: _____	Grado: _____	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"></div> 39 </div>
Maestra/o de clase: _____	Anotador: _____		
Marque con un círculo la forma utilizada (A, B, C, o CH)			
Doble el encabezado hacia atrás antes de que el niño/la niña use la hoja.			
<div style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"></div>			

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**Forma A**

1. Tengo un perro en la casa.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
- Lo llevo al parque conmigo
- 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39

**Forma B**

2. Papá está en casa.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
- Dice que vamos a jugar a la
- 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33
- pelota.
- 34 35 36 37 38 39

**Forma C**

3. Yo tengo una gata café.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
- Le gusta dormir en mi cama.
- 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39

**Forma CH**

4. Ya viene el tren. Se va a
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
- parar aquí. Nos vamos a subir.
- 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39

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WRITING VOCABULARY OBSERVATION SHEET	
Name: _____	Date: _____
Age: _____	
Recorder: _____	TEST SCORE: <input type="text"/>
Date of Birth: _____	STANINE GROUP: <input type="text"/>
(Fold heading under before child uses sheet)	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 400px; margin-top: 10px;"></div>	
COMMENT	

40

HOJA DE OBSERVACIÓN DEL VOCABULARIO DE ESCRITURA			Resultado
Nombre: _____	Escuela: _____	Grado: _____	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
Maestra/o de clase: _____	Anotador: _____		
Doble el encabezado hacia atrás antes de que el niño/la niña use la hoja.			
<div style="border-top: 1px dashed black; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <p>COMENTARIO:</p>			

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RUNNING RECORD SHEET					
Name: _____		Date: _____		D. of B.: _____	
School: _____		Recorder: _____		Age: _____ yrs _____ mths	
Text Titles	Running words Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate	
1. Easy _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____	
2. Instructional _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____	
3. Hard _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____	
Directional movement _____					
<b>Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections</b>					
Information used or neglected [Meaning (M) Structure or Syntax (S) Visual (V)]					
Easy _____					
Instructional _____					
Hard _____					
Cross-checking on information (Note that this behaviour changes over time)					
_____					
_____					
Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections (see <i>Observation Survey</i> pages 30–32)					

Page			E	SC	Information used	
					E MSV	SC MSV

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Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections (see <i>Observation Survey</i> pages 30–32)				
Page	E	SC	Information used	
			E MSV	SC MSV

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**HOJA DEL ANÁLISIS ACTUAL**

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha de Nacimiento: \_\_\_\_\_ Edad: \_\_\_\_\_ años \_\_\_\_\_ meses

Escuela: \_\_\_\_\_ Anotador: \_\_\_\_\_

Títulos del Texto	Palabras Actuales Errores	Proporción de Errores	Exactitud	Proporción de la Autocorrección
1. Fácil _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
2. Instruccional _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
3. Difícil _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____

Movimiento direccional \_\_\_\_\_

**Análisis de los Errores y de la Autocorrección**

Información utilizada o desatendida [Significado (S) Estructura (E) Visual (V)]

Fácil \_\_\_\_\_

Instruccional \_\_\_\_\_

Difícil \_\_\_\_\_

Comprobar la información. (Notar que esta estrategia cambia con el tiempo)

\_\_\_\_\_

Análisis de los Errores y de la Autocorrección (Vea las páginas del Instrumento de la Observación)

Página		E	AC	Información utilizada	
				E SEV	AC SEV

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Análisis de los Errores y de la Autocorrección (Vea las páginas del Instrumento de la Observación)					
Página		E	AC	Información utilizada	
				E SEV	AC SEV

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